

Message Text

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21

ACTION AID-05

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H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 COME-00 CIEP-01 AGR-05 EB-07 TRSE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1110

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 0459

FOR STATE AND AID

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AF, US, EAID

SUBJ: AID ADMINISTRATOR PARKER'S VISIT TO KABUL

SUMMARY: AID ADMINISTRATOR PARKER'S JANUARY 23 VISIT TO KABUL WAS SUCCESSFUL IN CONVEYING TO THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT OUR DESIRE TO CONTINUE TO BE HELPFUL IN ASSISTING IT WITH ITS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. THE AFGHANS STRESSED THEIR HOPE THAT THE US WILL ONCE AGAIN PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN THE HELMAND VALLEY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM WHICH THEY TERM AN "UNFINISHED SYMPHONY". THEY ALSO ASKED FOR ASSISTANCE WITH WHEAT AND FERTILIZER (DAP). PARKER EXPLAINED SOME OF THE LIMITATIONS ON OUR ABILITY TO HELP BUT MADE IT CLEAR WE WOULD CAREFULLY AND SYMPATHETICALLY EXAMINE AFGHAN NEEDS. ON THE HELMAND, HE ASKED ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR NOOTER TO VISIT THE VALLEY AS A PRELUDE TO FURTHER TALKS BETWEEN US ON THAT SUBJECT. NOOTER WILL MAKE THE TRIP JEXUARY 24-25. END SUMMARY.

1. AID ADMINISTRATOR PARKER VISITED KABUL JANUARY 23 AND MET WITH DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SHARQ, MINISTER OF EDUCATION QAYUM, WHO ALSO HOLDS MINES AND INDUSTRIES PORTFOLIO, MINISTER OF PLANNING KHORRAM, AND MINISTER OF COMMERCE JALALLAR AND DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER
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ABDULLAH. DISCUSSIONS WERE HELD IN BUSINESSLIKE AND CORDIAL

ATMOSPHERE. PARKER EXPRESSED EMPATHY OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE FOR PROUD, INDEPENDENT, SELF-RELIANT AFGHANS AND CONVEYED BEST WISHES OF PRESIDENT FORD AND SECRETARY KISSINGER. AFGHANS CLEARLY ARE STILL IN GLOW OF KISSINGER VISIT AND SENT BEST WISHES TO HIM AND PRESIDENT. PARKER DID NOT HAVE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT DAOUD, WHO ACCORDING ABDULLAH, WAS BUSY ON ACCOUNT OF AFGHAN HOLIDAYS (JANUARY 23 IS MIDDLE DAY OF A THREE-DAY WEEKEND) AND A REGULAR THURSDAY TRIP OUTSIDE OF KABUL "TO SEE PROJECTS". FOLLOWING IS CAPSULE OF DISCUSSIONS ON SPECIFIC MATTERS. DETAILED MEMCONS FOLLOW.

2. HELMAND VALLEY. AFGHANS EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR PAST US ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN AND PLEASURE AT PROSPECTIVE US ASSISTANCE IN FIELDS OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT. BUT THEY STRONGLY STRESSED THAT THEIR TOP PRIORITY FOR FUTURE US AID IS THE HELMAND VALLEY, SAYING THAT IT IS AN "UNFINISHED SYMPHONY" WHERE THE PRESTIGE OF BOTH COUNTRIES IS INVOLVED. SHARQ ADDED THAT ADDITIONAL US AID THERE WOULD PROVIDE A MORALE BOOST FOR AFGHANISTAN. IN RESPONSE PARKER SAID THAT THE HELMAND IS AN AFGHAN SYMPHONY REQUIRING AN AFGHAN COMPOSER AND AN AFGHAN CONDUCTOR. HE MENTIONED PAST PROBLEMS WHICH GIVE RISE TO CONGRESSIONAL REALITIES WHICH WE MUST FACE. HE MENTIONED THAT THE US GIVES ASSISTANCE BOTH ON A BILATERAL BASIS AND THROUGH MULTILATERAL AGENCIES, AND THAT SOME OF THE HELMAND PROJECTS WOULD APPEAR TO FIT THE LATTER BETTER THAN THE FORMER. HE NOTED THAT OUR BILATERAL ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE MORE CLOSELY RELATED TO BENEFITTING THE PEOPLE SUCH AS POOR FARMERS, ALTHOUGH WE ARE NOT WITHOUT SOME FLEXIBILITY IN THAT REGARD. FINALLY HE STATED THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER AND HE HAVE ASKED ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR NOOTER TO VISIT THE VALLEY DURING HIS CURRENT TRIP TO AFGHANISTAN (NOOTER WAS PRESENT AT ALL OF PARKER'S CONVERSATIONS) TO STUDY BOTH THE OVERALL CONCEPT AND THE SPECIFICS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

PROGRAM THERE IN LIGHT OF THE IMPORTANCE ATTACHED TO THAT PROGRAM BY THE GOA. HE SAID THAT WE COULD TALK MORE AFTER NOOTER'S VISIT. ABDULLAH INFORMED PARKER THAT GOVERNOR TAWAB ASSEFI OF HERAT WOULD JOINT NOOTER IN THE VALLEY. COMMENT:ASSEFI IS ONE OF THE MOST KNOWLED-

GEABLE AFGHANS WITH RESPECT TO THE HELMAND AS WELL AS A HIGHLY COMPETENT AND DEVELOPMENT-MINDED ENGINEER.

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3. WHEAT. THE AFGHANS EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT WHAT THEY CONSIDER A POSSIBLE SHORTFALL IN SNOWFALL THIS WINTER AND ASKED IF THE US COULD SUPPLY 100,000 TONS OF WHEAT. THEY SAID THAT THEY HAD BEEN UNABLE TO OBTAIN WHEAT FROM THE SOVIETS BUT PLANNED DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CANADIANS AND AUSTRALIANS. FROM ALL SOURCES THEY HOPED TO IMPORT 300,000 TONS DURING THE COMING CROP YEAR. PARKER SAID THAT THE TIMING OF AFGHAN NEEDS WOULD BE AN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION FOR US, NOTING THE SEVERE CONSTRAINTS ON THE AVAILABILITY OF PL-480 WHEAT

IN FY1975 AND SAYING THAT THERE IS LITTLE PROSPECT WE COULD MAKE WHEAT AVAILABLE TO AFGHANISTAN THIS FISCAL YEAR. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE GOA WORK WITH THE AID MISSION ON THE SPECIFICS, FOLLOWING WHICH WE COULD LOOK INTO POSSIBILITIES FOR FY 1976.

4. FERTILIZER (DAP). THE AFGHANS ASKED IF THE US COULD SUPPLY DAP, KHORRAM MENTIONING A TOTAL IMPORT REQUIREMENT OF 171,000 TONS OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS. PARKER SAID WE WOULD TAKE A CAREFUL LOOK ONCE WE HAVE SOME SPECIFICS. HE ADDED THAT WE WOULD HAVE TO BE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE FERTILIZER WOULD REACH THE SMALL FARMER.

5. JOINT US-THIRD COUNTRY PROJECTS. PARKER MENTIONED THE POSSIBILITY OF AID SUPPLYING TECHNICAL AND MANAGERIAL KNOW-HOW IN CONNECTION WITH PROJECTS FINANCED BY THIRD COUNTRIES, SUCH AS OIL PRODUCERS, WHICH THEMSELVES LACK SUCH KNOW-HOW. AFGHANS SHOWED SOME INTEREST IN PURSUING THIS SUBJECT, AND PARKER SUGGESTED THEY FOLLOW UP WITH AID MISSION.

6. AGRIBUSINESS. AFGHANS EXPRESSED DESIRE FOR ASSISTANCE IN BUILDING AGRICULTURALLY RELATED INDUSTRY, PRIMARILY FOR EXPORT BUT ALSO TO MEET DOMESTIC NEEDS. PARKER NOTED OUR INTEREST IN THIS FIELD AND AGAIN SUGGESTED USAID FOLLOWUP.

7. AFGHAN ECONOMIC SITUATION. JALLALAR INDICATED CONCERN ABOUT FALLING PRICES OF SOME AFGHAN EXPORTS AND INFLATIONARY PRESSURES ON SOME BASIC IMPORTS. HE SAID THAT IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO LET PRICES RISE WHILE AT THE SAME TIME THE GOA DOES NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT FUNDS WITH WHICH TO KEEP THEM DOWN THROUGH SUBSIDIES. HE MENTIONED THE GOA IS ENGAGING IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE EEC CONCERNING AFGHAN EXPORTS AND WITH OIL-PRODUCING COUNTRIES CONCERNING PETROLEUM IMPORTS.

8. PRESS STATEMENT. A JOINT STATEMENT ON PARKER'S VISIT BEING CONFIDENTIAL

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ISSUED MORNING JANUARY 24 (KABUL TIME - GMT PLUS 4.5) TRANSMITTED BY USINFO.
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